THE PINE RIDGE ASSOCIATION • HENRY W. COE STATE PARK •

The Ponderosa

The Pine Ridge Association Newsletter
Henry W. Coe State Park

January 1999

From under My Brim

by Barry Breckling

Tick Talk

Once again she started climbing up the deeply furrowed trunk of the blue oak tree. This would be her second try to find an animal to land on and feast upon. Four hours and forty-two minutes later she reached the end of a branch 32 feet above the trail. She jockeyed around on the branch until she was directly above the trail.

With tiny eyes, she patiently watched the terrain below. A mouse scurried across the trail and later a jackrabbit ran by, but they were too fast, two small, and mostly too far away to be likely victims. Finally, two days later, a young male deer wandered slowly along the trail, sniffing around for assorted leafy morsels to munch on.

The famished tick poised herself in readiness. When the timing seemed perfect, she leaped into the air and fell towards her unsuspecting prey. Her target was the deer's neck, but at the last crucial moment the deer turned his head to see what a noisy scrub jay was complaining about, and the tick missed by a mere quarter inch. She landed with a thud on the hard dirt of the trail. "Darn!" she muttered. But no one heard.

To add insult to injury or, I guess, injury to injury, the young buck stepped squarely on top of her as he continued down the trail, looking for more greenery. Her tough little body protected her somewhat, and, pulling herself together, she began crawling (with a bit of a limp) back towards the trunk of the blue oak tree.

There is much myth and misinformation about ticks. One commonly accepted belief is that ticks climb trees and wait to leap off and land on unsuspecting victims who wander by down below. Although ticks may seem to have dropped from out of nowhere and lodged in your hairline, it's more likely that they posed on a grass stem, hitched a ride on your pants, and diligently climbed up you and your clothing until they found a spot they liked.

It may be that some ticks climb trees and launch themselves into the air. But those that do, in my opinion, must be young thrill-seekers, mentally deranged, or suicidal.

Ticks at Coe Park

In Coe Park, we find ticks from late fall through late spring,

Inside this issue . . .

Description of local life early in the century

Memories from Coe Park—long before it was a park

The craziest endurance race ever!

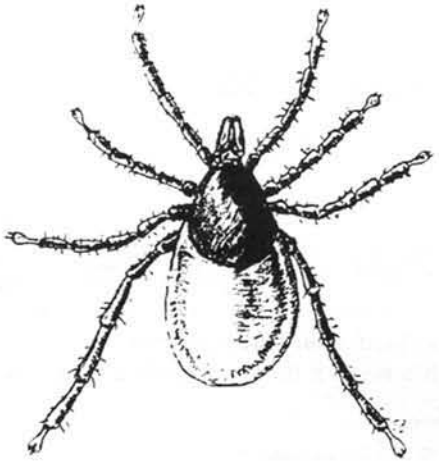
Plans to expand the Visitor Center next summer

. . . and more!

Recycled Paper

the moister months of the year. The park has at least three species of ticks that bite humans—two common species of hard-bodied ticks and one uncommon soft-bodied tick species.

The **western black-legged tick** is often seen early in the tick season. The males have blackish-brown bodies, and the larger females have reddish-brown bodies. They're fairly small ticks and, as you might expect, they both have black legs.



FEMALE WESTERN BLACK-LEGGED TICK

The **Pacific Coast tick** is also common in the park. It looks a lot like the American dog tick (also called the wood tick), which might also inhabit the park. (It's impossible to tell the two species apart in the field.) Both male and female Pacific Coast ticks have some gray on their bodies, but the female's gray is confined to the shield portion of her back.

The soft-bodied **pajahuello tick** is less common in the park. Although it's not known to carry human diseases, some people are allergic to its bite and can develop a severe reaction, with swelling, redness, and pain that take months to disappear.

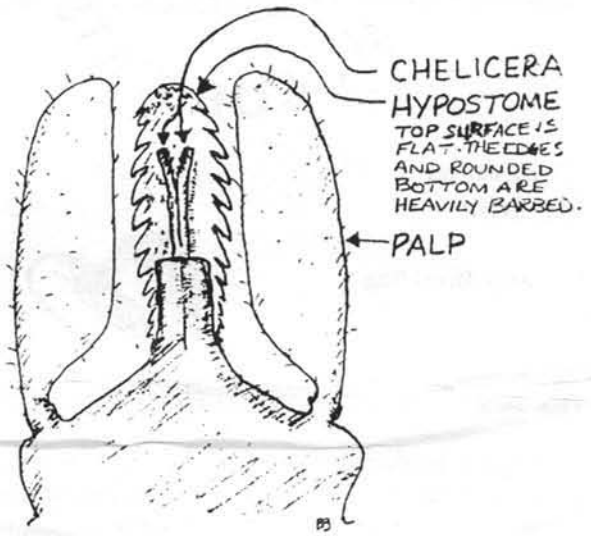
Several much less common species of ticks in the park attach to hosts that humans don't often come in contact with, and they don't seem to have developed a taste for human blood.

Catching and Feeding on Prey (human or otherwise)
All ticks know when prey is near. They use sense organs to detect animal scent, carbon dioxide, and heat. The adult western black-legged and Pacific Coast ticks are usually found at the end of grass stems or other vegetation, often along trails. They can also be found in brush. Younger stages crawl onto prey from the ground and low vegetation. The adult ticks wait, with their front legs outstretched, and when an animal brushes against the vegetation, the tick grabs on. The pajahuello tick lives in gravely soil and looks like a small stone. It crawls along the ground and onto its prey.

Ticks cut an opening in the skin and insert their barbed snout. The barbs make it difficult to remove the tick, and they also secrete a cement that helps keep them attached. They inject their saliva into the cut. The saliva contains:

- an anesthetic that keeps the prey from feeling the bite until the tick is firmly attached,
- anticoagulants that thin the blood to make it easier to slurp up,
- blood vessel dilators to increase blood flow,
- digestive enzymes to start the digestive process before the meal reaches their gut,
- and, on occasion, disease organisms.

TICK HEAD AND MOUTH PARTS
TOP VIEW



THE TICK USES ITS PALPS TO LOCATE A SUITABLE BITE SITE. BESIDES THEIR SENSORY FUNCTION, PALPS PROTECT MOUTH PARTS. THE CHELICERA CUT A HOLE IN THE SKIN OF THE HOST ANIMAL AND THE HYPOSTOME IS INSERTED INTO THE HOLE. THE CHELICERA CUT CAPILLARIES, THE BLOOD POOLS; AND THE TICK SUCKS THE BLOOD.

The ticks suck the blood of their victims and drop off when they become full. A female tick, after mating, which often occurs on the host animal, lays thousands of eggs on the ground. The eggs hatch into larva, and after they feed for a period of time the larva molt into the nymph stage. Both the larva and nymph stages of our hard-bodied ticks feed on the blood of lizards, birds, and small mammals. It's extremely uncommon for the larva and nymph stages of our ticks to attach to humans.

Diseases

Ticks are vectors, which means that they pass diseases on to other animal species, and there are many diseases that ticks can carry and pass on to humans. Lyme disease is the one that's gotten the most press though, and rightfully so. It is the most common vector-transmitted disease in the United States.

In 1982, a scientist identified the bacteria responsible for the outbreak of a mysterious disease in Connecticut. The disease had been misdiagnosed as rheumatoid arthritis in 1975 in a small town called Old Lyme. The disease is not a new one. Researchers believe that a similar tick-related disease reported in Europe about a hundred years ago was in fact the same disease. Since the bacteria was identified in 1982, Lyme disease has been diagnosed in many parts of the world, including Asia, Africa, and Australia.

The bacteria responsible for the outbreak in Connecticut was originally thought to be transmitted by a new species of tick, which was given the scientific name *Ixodes dammini.* Recently, however, the ticks have been identified as northern populations of the already described tick *Ixodes scapularis,* a species that's found in every state east of the Rocky Mountains. The same tick is called a black-legged tick in the South, a deer tick in the Northeast, and a bear tick in the Midwest. The only other tick species known to carry Lyme disease in the United States is the western black-legged tick (*Ixodes pacificus*), which is found in the Pacific states and in certain areas of the Southwest.

Lyme disease has been recorded in 48 states, and its incidence seems to be on the rise. The disease is caused by a spiral-shaped bacterium called a spirochete. In humans, early symptoms of the disease usually begin from 7 to 9 days after an infectious bite, but they can occur in as few as 3 days and as many as 30. In about 60 percent of the cases, an expanding red rash develops, often with a clear center. This rash, described as a "bull's-eye" rash, can grow to several inches in diameter. The red rash that forms a few hours after a tick bite, lasts for a few days, and does not expand is not a symptom of Lyme disease.

During the first stage of the disease, people usually develop flu-like symptoms, such as fever, chills, muscle and joint pain, fatigue, and loss of appetite. Weeks or months later, during the second stage, they often suffer from severe headaches, paralysis of facial muscles, and lethargy, symptoms that normally last for several weeks and then disappear. Months or years later, a third stage can set in, with symptoms like arthritis of the larger joints, fatigue, numbness, and memory loss.

As if Lyme disease were not bad enough, ticks in California can also carry Rocky Mountain spotted fever, tick paralysis, human monocytic ehrlichiosis, human granulocytic ehrlichiosis, relapsing fever, babesiosis, Colorado tick fever, and tularemia.

An Optimistic Outlook

The prospects are not as bleak as they may seem for outdoor enthusiasts in the West. Although several tickborne diseases can cause dreadful illnesses and even death, their occurrences are rare. Even the relatively common Lyme disease is much more common in eastern states than it is in the West. In some New England states up to 60 percent of black-legged ticks carry Lyme disease, but in California the percentage is rarely above 5 percent, and in our area it's only about 0.5 percent.

If a tick with Lyme disease bites you and you remove the tick promptly, your chances of getting the disease are slim. There is some disagreement about the amount of time a tick must be attached to a human before it can transmit an infectious dose of Lyme disease bacteria. The most conservative estimate I've found is 4 hours, but the most common estimates are somewhere around 36 hours. The reason for the delay is that the bacteria doesn't begin to multiply in the gut of the tick until the tick starts to take in blood. Then the bacteria must enter the tick's blood system and migrate to its saliva, a journey that takes time.

In the East, humans are commonly bitten by both the adult and the nymph stages of black-legged ticks, and the nymphs are so small that people often don't know that they've been bitten. In the West, people are rarely bitten by the nymph stage of the western black-legged tick, and if you get bitten by an adult tick, you'll most likely know it. When the tick's anesthetic wears off, its human host usually feels a sharp sting at the site of the bite.

Science in Action

When it became known that western black-legged ticks were significantly less likely to carry Lyme disease than their eastern relatives, scientists began studying the ticks and their host animals to find out why. Biologists decided that the low infection rate found in the western ticks was simply not high enough to keep their host animals infected and sustain the disease, so they began looking for other possibilities.

University of California biologists discovered that one of the western black-legged tick's hosts is the dusky-footed woodrat. Then they found that the woodrat was also host to another species of tick (*Ixodes neotomae*), one that never bites humans. That tick has a Lyme disease infection rate of about 15 percent—high enough to sustain the disease in woodrats.

The woodrat discovery was a definite breakthrough, but it still didn't explain why the western black-legged tick's infection rate was so low. The answer to that puzzle became clear very recently. Scientists have just discovered that western fence

lizards, one of the most common hosts for the larval and nymph stages of western black-legged ticks, play a major role in reducing the incidence of Lyme disease in the West. The lizard's blood contains a substance that kills Lyme disease bacteria. When a tick bites a lizard, the bacteria enters the lizard's bloodstream and dies, and when the lizard's blood enters the bloodstream of the feeding tick, the tick's body is also cleansed of the bacteria.

Western black-legged ticks also feed on other rodents, including kangaroo rats, and at least one other tick is known to be a part of the Lyme disease connection. What's more, there are different strains of the Lyme disease spirochete, another complication (and probably not the last) in the highly complex life cycle of a single disease.

Lyme Disease Diagnosis and Treatment

If you think you might have Lyme disease, see a physician as soon as possible. The disease is usually diagnosed by the bull's-eye rash, the flu-like symptoms, and knowledge that the person with the symptoms may have been bitten by a tick. Blood tests are often used to confirm a diagnosis, but the test results are meaningless during the first several weeks following a tick bite.

Antibiotics administered during the first stage of the disease usually eliminate it entirely or at least decrease the intensity of later symptoms. If the disease is left untreated, the later symptoms can be debilitating, but those symptoms occur in only about 10 percent of untreated cases.

Soon after Lyme disease was discovered, researchers began working on potential vaccines. In May 1998, the Food and Drug Administration approved a vaccine but issued restrictions on its use. The vaccine is not to be used on people with arthritis or on children under the age of 15. Booster shots, which may be required to maintain an immunity, are not to be given until more research is done. The company that developed the vaccine is to continue long-term safety research.

The approved vaccine is not 100 percent effective. A person can have an almost 80 percent chance to develop immunity but only after completion of a series of three shots taken over the period of a year. And there are still a lot of unanswered questions about the vaccine.

The Best Defense is Good Sense

Ticks will normally grab on to one of your legs or your feet, climb up your body and under your clothes, and search for a suitable place to dig in. To keep ticks from crawling up inside your pants legs, wear long pants, rather than shorts, and either wear gaiters or tuck your pants into your socks. When you hike cross country or on narrow trails during tick season, check your legs for ticks every 10 to 20 minutes and do a full body tick check at the end of the day. Using these precautions, you can usually keep ticks from finding their way to their preferred destinations.

For even better protection, you can use repellents containing DEET, insecticides containing permethrin, or a combination of the two. You can apply a DEET solution on your skin, your clothing, or both to repel ticks. Applying it on your shoes, socks, and lower legs will deter most ticks. Permethrin, sold under brand names like Permanone and Duranon, is applied to clothing. It's not effective when used on skin because our skin deactivates it rapidly. Permethrin will both repel ticks and kill those that come in contact with it. When applied to clothing, permethrin's effectiveness lasts for a couple weeks and through a couple washings.

Removing Ticks

If a tick does bore into you, it's important that you remove it promptly and properly. Several good tick removal devices are available on the market. If you use one of them, read and carefully follow the directions. If you don't have a removal device, you can use a pair of fine-point tweezers. Grasp the tick as close as possible to the point of attachment and slowly and gently pull until your skin starts to lift. Keep up the gentle pressure (without lifting farther) until the tick comes loose. Don't twist or jerk. If you do, you might squish the tick or break off its head or mouth parts.

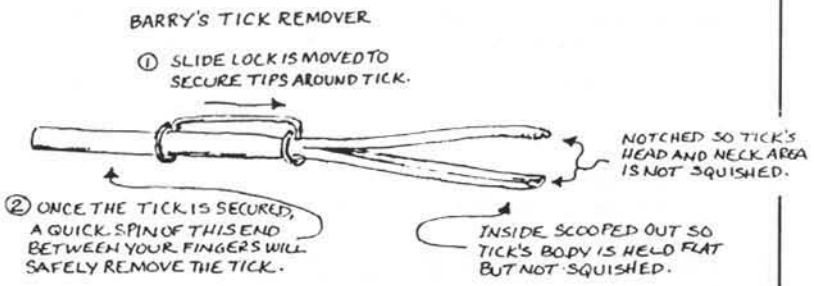
If you leave part of the tick in your skin, you should have it removed by a physician. Otherwise, you may get an infection in the bite area. If the tick's body is squished and its body fluids get on you, it's possible that Lyme disease bacteria or other tick borne disease microbes could be absorbed through your skin.

If you don't have tweezers, you can usually grip the tick with your fingers and pull gently until the tick comes out. If you use your fingers, wear thin gloves or hold plastic wrap or paper between your fingers and the tick.

I've made a tick removing tool that works quite well. I started with a small twig about two and a half inches long and an eighth of an inch in diameter. I split the twig down about half its length and carved curved notches in the ends so that when you grasp a tick with it and lock the two halves together, the tick is caught, but not squished, in between. The tool is designed for spinning, rather than pulling. A quick spin and the tick is out. After you remove a tick, use an antiseptic on the wound and wash your hands and tools.

Some people still believe that you can get a tick to back out by putting petroleum jelly, nail polish, a drop of kerosene, or other chemicals on it, or by lighting a match, blowing it out and applying the hot tip to the tick's body. I've never known

any of these methods to work. The only result I've seen when they're used is a maimed or dead tick that's still attached. Research in such methods has yielded the same results.



Take a Hike

There's no reason to deprive yourself of trips into the Coe backcountry. Knowledge dispels unwarranted fear. Just remember:

- You can avoid areas where you might pick up ticks.
- If ticks get on you, you can easily pick them off, especially if you've dressed to keep ticks outside your clothing.
- Since ticks normally don't attach for several hours, you can usually find any that escaped earlier tick checks by doing a full-body tick check at the end of the day.
- You can greatly reduce the chances a tick will get on you by using special repellants and insecticides.
- In Coe Park, only one in 200 ticks carries Lyme disease, and if one of those ticks bites you, prompt and proper removal of the tick will keep you from becoming infected.
- And, finally, even if you do get a tick bite followed by Lyme disease symptoms, you can get early treatment to eliminate the disease.

Her long journey continued. She reached an outermost branch of the blue oak tree about 6 hours later. As she gazed down she saw the blurry image of a man pausing on the trail right below her. He was not too fast, he was not too small, and he wasn't that far away (closer than the deer was, anyway). She leaped into the air and dived towards her unsuspecting prey. Her target was the man's neck, but at the very last moment he leaned over to check his legs for ticks. The flying tick missed by a mere quarter inch and landed with a thud on the hard dirt of the trail. "Curses!" she muttered. But nobody heard.

Growing up in the Garzas

by Teddy Goodrich

Alice Elholm Davenport's family has had a long association with the Diablo Range in and around Coe Park. Her father-in-law, A.D. Davenport, founded the Bald Eagle Mine in the Quinto drainage. In later years, both he and his son, Alice's husband Arthur, prospected for quicksilver near Coe's eastern boundary.

Though only the uppermost portions of the Garzas drainage are part of the park, Alice's memories enhance our understanding of life on a farm in the hills in the early part of the century.

Her father, Andrew Elholm, emigrated to the United States from the island of Als in Denmark in the late 1800s and settled in San Francisco. He first ran a cigar stand in the Ferry Building and then was hired to drive a horse-drawn trolley through the streets of the city. When his finances allowed, he returned to Als for his fiancée, Christina Christiansen. She worked as a nanny for a family in San Francisco until she and Andrew married in 1891.

After their marriage, they moved to a farm on the Orestimba, then to the Garzas on 120 acres they leased from Simon Newman.

Alice was born on the farm on May 4, 1910. A neighbor, Mrs. Petersen, assisted her mother when she was born. Alice was the sixth child in the family, joining four older brothers and one older sister.

Her family was engaged in dry farming, depending on rainfall to grow wheat and barley. The grain was harvested anytime from the end of May until July, depending on the weather. A harvester was pulled through the fields by horses or mules, and the grain was threshed as it was harvested. Two containers on the rear of the harvester held sacks into which the grain dropped. As each sack filled, one of Alice's brothers would sew it shut. The hay that was left after threshing was gathered up and stored in the barn. Enough grain was saved from each harvest to reseed the fields the following winter.

The Elholms hired help in the summer to help with the harvest, and Alice's brothers in turn hired out to help other farmers with their harvest.

About 1916, the family purchased a tractor to replace the horse and mules. Many of the farms in the area were hilly, some of them steeply so, and it was not only hot but dangerous work pulling a harvester over rough terrain.

In the fall, after the harvest, her brothers hauled gravel from the creek and sold it to Stanislaus county to be used in road construction. A chute in the creek helped them load the gravel into a horse-drawn wagon.

Alice had many chores. These included washing the family's clothes and driving the horse, a big draft animal called Oscar Ox, that manipulated the derrick that lifted hay into the barn.

Living without electricity or running water developed ingenuity and resourcefulness. A hose left in the hot sun provided warm water for a bath.

Everyone cooked on a wood stove, and a man named Louie lived back in the hills and chopped wood to bring to the farms for sale. He brought the wood to the Elholm's farm in a cart drawn by a mule. Alice's brothers would then take him into Newman so he could purchase his groceries. He was well liked by the family, though Alice and her sister thought he was very amusing because he insisted he had two left feet and had a funny way of speaking.

Alice attended Occidental School, which was located at the corner of Orchard and Jorgensen Roads. All eight grades were taught in one room. Alice recalled that there were just a few students in each grade. In some cases children started first grade as early as age four or five, just so there would be enough students to keep the school open. The teachers, who were all female, stayed only a year or two, frequently marrying local men. The teacher boarded around with her students' families, staying three or four months with each one.

A special Sunday treat was a trip into Gustine to the ice cream parlor owned by Jim Holst. Here the family indulged in real banana splits served in footed glass dishes—three kinds of ice cream, three different syrups, nuts, cherries, and real whipped cream—all for 25¢!

Some of her other recollections included Richey's Camp just below the Garzas Narrows where a barbecue was always held the night before deer season opened. Francis Twitchell, who had a camp on Robinson Creek, was rarely seen without his white mule and cart. Margene Snodgrass (the Rooster Comb Ranch was once the Snodgrass Ranch) lived in Newman when she was a teenager so she could attend high school and travel back to her family "in the hills" on weekends. The road up the Garzas was so impassable during the winter that the Snodgrasses would park a car on the Gustine side of the Narrows, then ride horses from the ranch to the car. This was the only way they could get into town for groceries and other necessities during wet weather. Charlie Miles had the earliest homestead in the Garzas Narrows. He made a living bringing downed wood into Gustine, where he sold it for firewood.

The solitude of the hills has always attracted a few persons who prefer their own company to that of society. One such hermit was Rudolph Gruber, who lived in the Garzas in a tiny cabin furnished with little more than a bed and a stove. A man known only as "the Dutchman" lived in a cave in the bank of a creek above the Garzas. Though Alice was only nine years old at the time, she recalls people saying, "He's not going to last long; he's not a hill person." He didn't.

In 1924, Alice left the ranch with her mother and sister to live in Newman and attend high school there. Her farm days had come to an end.

Mountain Lion Adventure

by Winnifred Coe Verbica

"You will have a wonderful time at Pine Ridge," Mother assured me in June after my eighth birthday. "Ben has done a fine job as foreman, and you'll like his wife, Callie; they will take good care of you. We'll be praying for you, and you'll love the ranch. You will have a great summer riding with Ben every day!"

With these words, Mother and Dad prepared me for a three-months stay at the upper ranch that belonged to my father, Henry Sutcliffe Coe.

Bumping along the winding dirt road east of Morgan Hill through the rugged hills in our old ford pickup, I caught my breath as I stared at the mountains studded with ponderosa pines. "Will we ever get there?" I wondered aloud.

"Watch the road for raccoons or deer," Dad said, as he changed gears. "You might even see a lion! Quite a few of them around this year. You'll be riding Conejo, a dappled gray mustang; that means rabbit in Spanish. Named him because he looks like a rabbit, small and sure-footed. He likes to go at a trot to keep up with larger horses, but you'll get used to him."

My heart jumped as we rounded the last bend, and I spotted the rustic mountain cabin, barns, and corral. Ben strolled toward us, bow-legged and wiry, his spurs dangling from his well worn boots, while Callie hurried from the cabin; her levis were as creased as his, and her plaid wool shirt a sharp con-

trast to the warm day. Her tanned face was wreathed in a warm smile. "Glad you're here. Come on in; just made some coffee, and I've got milk and cookies for you, young lady."

After a short visit, Mother and Dad left me in the Cherokee Indian couple's care. As I studied Callie, I remembered the book on American Indians I had just read and what instinctive love I had felt for them. Yet, as I climbed into the top bunk that night, I felt strange and lonely and scared. "Winnifred," Mother had told me, "whenever you're afraid, remember Jesus is right there with you. Pray and He'll hear you."

I prayed and felt better instantly, warmed by Christ's presence as I looked out at the huge round moon.

After breakfast each day started at dawn with saddling Conejo. The moment I felt his mane in my hands, I knew I had a friend. "He's just my size," I thought, "I'm going to like this horse!" Dad was right! Small as he was, Conejo matched Ben's tall bay's stride. I held the leather reins loosely, relaxing my hand against the pummel and let my horse have his head. The smell of the filaree grass, the view of the golden hills, and Conejo's silky hide as my hand patted his sleek neck gave me a sensation of wonder and comfort.

One scorching July day we stopped for lunch beside a stream deep in the back country, the tall pines hedging us like sentinels. I knelt beside the creek and cupped my hands to splash cool water on my face, then slurped large gulps. I turned my head and looked eye to eye with Conejo as he, too, quenched his thirst. We tied the horses to a sturdy ponderosa branch and enjoyed the moist venison sandwiches and the sweet apple crisps Callie had packed.

Ben's three dogs suddenly began a frantic yipping! "Must've treed somethin'." Bennie's eyes narrowed as he looked through the brush. "Maybe a coon. Better have a look." I followed him into a thicket. Looking over Ben's shoulder, I gasped as I saw a huge mountain lion growling down at us, stretched full length on a branch directly overhead, her long tail swishing back and forth.

Ben grabbed my hand. "Hold still, there's another one!" A tawny shadow escaped into the brush. The other cat snarled overhead.

"We can make us fifty bucks," Ben whispered (the state bounty for every lion killed). I could see his hand slowly move to the holster he carried around his waist. He pulled out his gun; before I could blink, I heard the shot and saw the lion spring from one tree to another.

"Stay here. Watch the horses. I'm gonna track it!"

With those words, Ben left, the dogs yelping in the distance. My heart pounded as I returned to the horses. The scent of lion hung in the hot air and the wide-eyed horses pawed the ground and snorted. "It's okay, Conejo; I'm just as scared as you." I put my head against the warm animal and hugged his neck. "Ben won't be long; everything will be all right, you'll see." My mouth spoke words that sounded hollow to my ears.

Time hung like morning fog. My courage fell like the pine cones that dropped from the trees. I waited as long as I could and then called, "Ben, I'm scared. Where are you?"

After an agonizing period, which I later learned was close to three hours, Ben answered my call into the forest. Quickly, I wiped away the tears and asked, "Did you get it?"

"I'm comin', I'm comin'; I got em;" he came running. "I'll come back to pick up the cat later; let me take you home."

"Oh, no, I want to see it! Can I take it on my saddle?" The words tumbled out as I rushed with Ben to the dead mountain lion. "How did you kill it?"

"Even after three shots, my 22 didn't stop her," Ben replied. "She went after old Tuffy and would of killed him if I had not used my chaps as a shield and fought my way up to her head. I finally got her with the butt of the gun!"

"You think you were scared," Ben said, his face flushed and concerned; "you should of seen me! This cat circled real close to where you were with the horses!"

"Oh, Ben, I was so scared I thought I'd die, but I prayed and I know that Jesus protected me."

"You earned the right to carry this, Miss." Ben hoisted the huge carcass onto my saddle. Even dead she seemed gigantic! Ben let me lead the way. Conejo caught my excitement and pranced back to camp.

Ben allowed me to watch as he skinned the lioness. I sat with my elbows and chin resting on the fence, my head cocked, and my eyes getting wider and wider as he took the hide off the dead animal. "We'll dry this out, soften it, tan it a bit, and then you can have it. Your first big game!"

I ran my fingers through the fur. Ben later gave it to me and I still have the hide after 55 years.

The lion adventure lives in my memory as real as it was the summer I was eight. Santa Clara Valley has changed. Now Pine Ridge is called "Coe State Park" in honor of my grandfather, Henry Willard Coe. Its 81,000 acres provide rustic recreation for the area that is now termed Silicon Valley.
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California Eco Adventure Race at Coe Park

by David Janich

On September 18 and 19, Henry Coe State Park was the focal point of the California Eco Adventure team race organized by California Sports Marketing. When I hear the term "Eco Challenge," I think of the outback of Australia with multinational teams struggling through wilderness with minimal contact with civilization. This "Eco Challenge" had an unusual twist to it because part of the race was to be run through a metropolitan area as well as the roads and trails of Coe Park. Initially, the race was to include the San Luis Reservoir, but legal wrangling from a pending real estate sale turned the all "wilderness" race into one during which you could stop off at the nearest 7-11 for a Big Gulp.

I volunteered to help at Coe Headquarters to log the teams in and out, point them down East Dunne Avenue on the way to the next check point, and keep the team crew members from parking on the museum road.

Basic rules of the race:

1. Teams compete with each other (and the elements) by hiking, biking, kayaking, tyrolean traversing, and rappelling from one check point to another.
2. Teams have to stay together, supposedly within 100 yards.
3. All members of a team must finish together.
4. The finishers must complete the race within an allotted time.
5. Each team must check in at each of the checkpoints and have their "passport" stamped.
6. The winner in each class is determined by the fastest overall time.

There were 24 teams entered in the race. Teams were comprised of three or four members, each of whom paid an entry fee of $300. Teams were all male, all female, or co-ed and did not know where the race was to take place until the day before the race was to begin. Kay Robinson was sworn to secrecy, since the arrangements for the Adventure take months to organize, and teams try to get a head start over the competition in planning their routes. On Thursday, the day before the race, each team was told the location of the check points, provided with a set of topo maps and a 1998 edition of the Henry Coe Park map (I hope they weren't confused with the recent changes of road names).

The race started off on Friday morning at 5 a.m. from Hunting Hollow with all the teams hiking to Check Point 1 (CP1) at Pacheco Falls. Each team member was required to perform a tyrolean traverse followed by a rappel. Unfortunately, the race encountered a traffic jam because some people got stuck on the tyrolean traverse, which resulted in delays of two to four hours. A tyrolean traverse is a method of crossing a ravine or gorge by means of pulling oneself across while dangling from an overhead rope. A rappel is a controlled decent off a cliff using a rope wound around the body in such a manner that you can control how fast you go down.

After CP1, the teams hiked/jogged/crawled to Coe Headquarters, which was CP2. At this point, each team member was interviewed and weighed by a paramedic to determine if he/she was lucid and to check for dehydration. The first team was expected to reach CP2 at 10 a.m. but due to the delays at CP1, it was noon before the first team was on the horizon. I biked out on Manzanita Point Road to Arnold Field and met the first team jogging in a tight, disciplined group. It turned out this was the SCAR team, who eventually won the overall race. In spite of an hour's delay at CP1 and getting lost for an hour, they reached CP2 an hour ahead of the next team! The last of the teams arrived at 7:29 p.m.

While at Coe Headquarters, I had the opportunity to talk to some of the teams. One three-man team came in and looked to be really pooped. One member had lost 12 pounds and was obviously dehydrated. They decided that they had had enough and asked what was the best way to get back to Hunting Hollow where they had left their vehicle. I offered that, since they had their mountain bikes, they could enjoy the ride back to Hunting Hollow via the delightful China Hole Trail and out through the Coyote Creek entrance. This was received with the question "is there any up hill?" After I affirmed this, they declined, and I next suggested that they could go down East Dunne Avenue to surface streets and go up Roop Road. This suggestion was also rejected because of the "up hill" issue, but a solution was eventually found. They would indeed ride down the road from Coe Headquarters but only to the nearest telephone, at which point they would call a cab to take one of the team to their truck.

At CP2, the teams, now on mountain bikes, proceeded to CP3 at Uvas Reservoir dam, where they jumped into hard-shelled kayaks and paddled to the north end, CP4, and paddled back to the dam, CP5. At this juncture in the race, they were supposed to engage in the "mystery water event," which was to pump up an inflatable kayak, hop in, paddle to the north end again (CP6) and back (CP7), and deflate the kayak for the

next team to use. However, because of the two- to four-hour backup at CP1 (remember the dangling hikers on the tyrolean?), the mystery water event was canceled in an effort to make up about two hours. At CP7, each team had to be off the water by 7:09 p.m. (Uvas Reservoir is a county park, and its hours are from sunrise to sunset). If they were unable to do so, the team was disqualified but could still finish the race for the practice. They would get a "finishers" placement but not be "ranked" in the results.

At CP7, the teams remounted their mountain bikes, which were now required to have lights, and headed back to Coe Headquarters, now CP8. After being weighed again to check for dehydration, the teams headed off to Mississippi Lake, CP9, and then back to Pacheco Falls, CP10, for another tyrolean, this time with their bikes dangling beneath them. After this, they biked to Bell Station, CP11, where the bikes were dropped off. They then donned their hiking boots and headed off to the last checkpoint (CP12), Lost Spring, where there was a glow stick hung from a tree and a hand punch for the passport. This checkpoint wasn't manned, so they punched their own passports and headed back to the start/finish at Hunting Hollow. The object was to complete the Adventure in under two days with the team still intact.

Here are some statistics showing mileage covered (m.) and approximate elevation gains in feet:

Hunting Hollow to Pacheco Falls	12.4 m., 3,120', hike
CP1 to Coe HQ, CP2	13.2 m., 4,030', hike
CP2 to Uvas Reservoir, CP3	20.8 m., 530', bike
CP3 to CP4 to CP5	4.6 m., kayak
[CP5 to CP6 to CP7 omitted]	
CP7 to Coe HQ, CP8	20.8 m., 2,770', bike
CP8 to Mississippi Lake, CP9	11.0 m., 2,600', bike
CP9 to Pacheco Falls, CP10	7.4 m., 1,400', bike
CP10 to Bell Station, CP11	12.6 m., 2,380', bike
CP11 to Lost Spring, CP12	20.2 m., 3,670', hike
CP12 to Hunting Hollow	8.3 m., 1,380', hike
Total	131.3 miles, 21,880'

Fastest time was 28 hours and 21 minutes; the last team to finish took 43 hours and 52 minutes. Seven of the 24 teams finished.

Hiking, biking, and kayaking 131 miles with 22,000 feet elevation gain in 28 to 44 hours gives you an idea of the mental and physical conditioning and stamina of the men and women of these teams. In addition, a good portion of the course was performed at night with no moon to light up the trails.

Don't you get tired just thinking about it?

CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

Park News

by Kay Robinson
Park Superintendent

With many years of preparation and fund-raising, we are nearing our goal of expanding and renovating the Visitor Center at Henry W. Coe State Park. The Fundraising Committee (Winslow Briggs, Barbara Bessey, Sheila Flodberg, Dave Perrin, Page Frechette, and myself as well as former member Bob Kelley) have been working for several years to further this project. The fund now stands at about $120,000. This is in addition to the funds that have already been expended by the Pine Ridge Association and the State for various elements leading to the project, such as the septic tank relocation, LPG tank relocation, survey work, sidewalk construction, plans and specifications by Architects Ferris, Johnson, and Perkins of San Diego, and design work on the exhibitry.

We have the plans in hand and the specifications are due shortly. The Fire Marshall has approved them; the next step is for the Office of the State Architect to review and approve them for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The project marches forward with an anticipated ground breaking next summer. One item that the Committee could use some help on is a detailed review of the plans and specifications and assistance in creating and finalizing the contract (based upon the American Institute of Architects Standard Form of Agreement). If any of our Pine Ridge Association members have experience and expertise in this field, we would love to hear from you. I would provide you with a copy of the draft contract and the plans and specs. If it would be advantageous to attend our meetings, we meet once per month, usually in the Palo Alto area. Please contact me at 408/848-4008 or by e-mail at *krob@coepark.parks.ca.gov.* It is important that we create a solid contract with accurate specifications and plans in order to reduce the chance of change orders and to maximize the value of our Expansion Fund.

The Coe Backcountry Weekend is coming up again this spring, April 24–25, 1999. You will be sent an application with your Pine Ridge Association *Ponderosa* in early spring, well before the March 31st deadline for applications. But, in case you miss it, you can always find the application on the

park's website at *www.coepark.parks.ca.gov.* As always, the event will be focused at the Orestimba Corral and the Pacheco Creek Crossing. If you have attended in the past, you've probably noticed that the corral seems to sag a bit more each year. Well, it has become a very hazardous situation. The upright poles are leaning, propped up by metal T-stakes; the railings are rotting away; and the overhead cross-pieces are falling down. Therefore, the decision was made, reluctantly, that the corral be removed this year. The CEQA document, which evaluates the impact of this decision, is in the process of being prepared. Although the corral has a wonderful ambience to it, the General Plan allows for its removal, as it is not a historic structure. The northerly section (north of the small tributary) will remain standing, at least for now. A complete report of the corral with photos, dimensions, map, etc. is on file so that, in the future, if funding is available and the desire exists, it could be reconstructed. Our pre-event clean-up weekend in 1999 will probably revolve around the removal of the corral as well as the usual trail clean-up projects.

I hope you've been able to take the time to enjoy the park this summer and fall. It seems winter is upon us and spring with its usual array of wildflowers will be upon us before we know it.

Membership & Contributions

by Lee Dittmann

We are pleased to welcome the new members listed below, who joined before December 4th. Thank you for your support! Welcome to the Pine Ridge Association. The number of memberships has now reached a record high of 392.

Peter & Julie Barney, Palo Alto
Benjamin Clark, Pacifica
Doug & Diane DeFrees, San Jose
Jack Donovan, Bangor, Maine
Ed Dove, Vallejo
George & Nancy Eisenman Family, San Lorenzo
Jack Faraone & Sherry Peacock, Los Gatos
Brian & Sheri Frank, San Jose
Dan Greene, Sunnyvale
Duane & Julie Harp, San Jose
Olivia Hutton, Morgan Hill
Ms. Judith Kunofsky, Berkeley
Mr. & Mrs. Garret E. Okumura, Morgan Hill
Joe Parisi, San Jose
Dave Raiman, San Jose
John Rapp, Hollister
Uwe J. Schaefer, Prunedale
Derek Smith, San Jose
Heike & Rainer Stabenow, Gilroy
Michael & Pamela Stone Family, Salinas
Joe Weed, Los Gatos
Patricia M. Woods, Hollister

Visitor Center Expansion Fund

Thanks to everyone who made a special contribution in response to the November 1997 fundraising mailing! Thanks to you, we were able to add almost $16,000 to the Expansion Fund account, surely the most successful effort to date.

New Contributors to the Visitor Center Expansion Fund

Steve Barba
Peter & Julie Barney
Rosalie & Max Bruning
George Chavarria
Thomas M. Chavez
Aileene & Larry Edsinger
Colleen Grzan
Pat Kerr
Raymond Oresto Leso
David Loeb
Jay Ward Smith
Mike Toney
James W. & Ann Ellen Tuomey

Special Contributions

In celebration of the 60th birthday of PRA member **Reverend Paul Danielson**, a special contribution has been received from Kristen Washburn and John Danielson.

Once again, the Pine Ridge Association has received a large donation from the **Gilroy Garlic Festival**. This donation, a portion of the over $200,000 the Garlic Festival gave to charities this past year, was received thanks to the assistance of Coe Volunteers at the event.

Thanks to **Arlene "Azz" Azzarello** for an especially generous "no strings attached" donation.

Thanks to founding member **Robert Patrie** for an especially generous Visitor Center Expansion Fund contribution.

Thanks to **Raphael Cardet** for his "thank-you contribution for assistance provided to the donor by Mike Meyer and Barry [Breckling] about a month ago [August]."

Why join the PRA?

Almost two years ago, we conducted a membership survey. Here is a sampling of the answers to the question **Why did you join the Pine Ridge Association?**

We like to hike at Coe—our BSA & GSA have been coming for years.

To learn more about Coe and meet people who share my pleasure and joy at Coe.

I ride in Coe 10–15 times/yr. & would like to give back some.

We love Henry Coe Park & want to help promote the park.

It is a way to become more involved in an outdoors area close to home & to participate in the Mothers Day Breakfast.

To learn more about the park, to promote the park, make it more accessible to the public, while preserving its quality, to volunteer for trail improvement & support activities. To meet nature girls.

Wanted to be involved in something after I retired that was different than what I did before

I enjoy hiking in Coe State Park and I want to support volunteer activities that make Coe a better place to visit. Also I enjoy reading *The Ponderosa*.

I've been traveling thru Coe Park for 67 yrs.—nosey about what's happening.

Its activities are very worthwhile; its accomplishments are numerous and excellent. I like to support it.

Gift membership.

Enjoyed hiking, saw all effort Libby Vincent put in to keep park going & all other volunteers. It's a worthy cause and we all need some personal feedback.

To learn more about Coe, its history, places, yearly events (moonlight hikes, backcountry weekend, etc.).

Because I love the park and what I've seen of the association members, they do too.

To more fully be a part of the Coe experience.

To bring the park to the people, to share the passion.

I've enjoyed Coe Park and would like to see it preserved and expanded.

I love the park, I am a strong believer that cooperating associations are vital for preserving our parks. Educating the public is fundamental to the task of preservation.

Great organization, wonderful cause, great people.

To aid the upkeep of the park systems in a time of dwindling budgets.

I have known & loved Henry Coe State Park for 30+ years, joining PRA seemed a good idea—it was.

Didn't join the PRA—I founded it!

PRA Calendar

Saturday, February 6: **Annual Meeting.** The annual meeting of the Pine Ridge Association and the Coe Park Uniformed Volunteers. An announcement including location, time, and agenda will be mailed to all PRA members in January.

Saturday & Sunday, February 27–28: **East Fork Outing.** Join PRA members for an exploration of the east fork of Coyote Creek. Please call Larry Haimowitz (408/778-6088) for additional information.

Saturday & Sunday, March 20–21: **Hunting Hollow/Redfern hike.** Join PRA members for an exploration of the south end of the park. The weekend will be rescheduled in case of rain. Please call Larry Haimowitz (408/778-6088) for additional information.

Saturday, March 20: The beginning of the **Spring Programs at Coe Park**. A list of all of the hikes, walks, and evening programs will be included in the next issue of the newsletter.

Saturday, March 27: **Barbed wire fest.** Join in the effort to remove barbed wire from various places in the park. For more information, call Doug Meyers at the Coe Sector Office (408/848-4006).

Saturday, April 10: The annual **Trails Day** at Coe Park. Help build and maintain trails in the park. For more information, call Doug Meyers at the Coe Sector office (408/848-4006).

Saturday & Sunday, April 24–25. The **Coe Backcountry Weekend**. Entry will again be by random draw. Applications will be mailed to all PRA members, will also be available at the park and at various businesses by early February, and can be printed off of Coe's website, *www.coepark.parks.ca.gov.* The deadline for application submission is March 31.

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Happy Holidays!

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The Ponderosa is a periodic publication of the Pine Ridge Association. The PRA's mission is to enhance and enrich the public's experience at Henry W. Coe State Park through education and interpretation. Articles and artwork relating to the history, natural history, and management of the park are welcome. Please send submissions to the editors at 127 Glenwood Avenue, Woodside, CA 94062; or call 650/851-7813.

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